

after the Parts have all appeared, I trust to be able to do so. In the meantime, however, I hope our application for assistance in the matter of material, as set forth in this letter, will result in obtaining in this country what has been asked for above.

Faithfully yours,

R. W. SHUFELDT.

3356-18th Street, Washington, D. C.
January 8th, 1914.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE feeling at the present moment against the traffic in wild bird plumage is stronger and more widespread than ever before. Following the lead of the United States, England has a bill in Parliament prohibiting the importation of plumage, and from practically all other countries come letters endorsing this stand. Quoting from the winter number of 'Bird Notes and News' we find the following from Prof. C. G. Schillings, the distinguished German naturalist: "The United States has found the only satisfactory solution of this question. Only direct prohibition will reach the core of the matter. . . . We German friends of nature and of the birds only wait anxiously that England, too, may get its Feather Importation law. We certainly will follow. If Australia, North America, England and Germany close the market, the trade will die out."

'German Fashion' for October 26, 1913, says: "Thanks to the prohibition of import into America and the coming Plumage Bill in England, the end is at hand of the use of the Egret in fashionable Millinery."

In a discussion at the Academy of Sciences at Paris, M. Perrier, Director of the Natural History Museum, protested strongly against the destruction of birds. He begged the Academy to decline the trade offer of \$2000 for the best method of domesticating egrets in farms. It was a mere blind, he said, to gain time and divert attention; everyone knew that these birds could not be domesticated.

In Holland Professor Swaen states that steps are being taken to prepare the public for a favorable reception of a bill to prohibit importation of wild bird plumage, and similar statements and letters of approval come from Denmark, Austria and Switzerland.

The direct effect of the American tariff prohibition is shown with great clearness when one studies the catalogues of the London feather auctions. In the 'N. Y. Zoological Society Bulletin' for January, Dr. Wm. T. Hornaday states that "exactly ten days from the signing of our tariff law by

President Wilson, the London feather market suffered a tremendous decline. Out of 1174 lots that were offered 368 had to be withdrawn because of bad prices and no buyers."

Among the lots that had to be withdrawn in consequence of the closing of the American market he cites: 1203 Greater Birds of Paradise, 22810 Kingfishes, 761 Emu, 3381 Pheasants, 54076 wing and tail quills of Condors, Hawks and Eagles, and 2494 ounces of Egret plumes (= to about 14,964 birds).

With the broadening of ornithological study, the student of birds is brought more than ever to a consideration of various questions bearing upon evolution—the inheritance of characters, relation of color patterns to environment, meaning and origin of secondary sexual characters, etc. Birds were favorite subjects with both Darwin and Wallace for study in connection with the theories of both natural and sexual selection and are admirably adapted for the purpose, as well as for the study of other allied problems.

The ornithologist of today cannot however afford to base his studies exclusively upon external conditions and to ignore the wonderful advances that have been made in recent years in the study of cells, especially of germ cells, which have placed the whole problem not only of heredity but of sex in an entirely new light. The enlightening experiments in breeding which have often corroborated the theories that originated in cell study must also demand his attention.

The study of the bird in relation to its environment is as important as ever but the student must at the same time be familiar with the results achieved in this new line of investigation.

It is often difficult for one to take up a subject of this kind and follow its development through a voluminous and widely scattered literature, but in this instance we have the whole subject clearly and concisely set forth in a little volume by Dr. Thomas H. Morgan, 'Heredity and Sex,'¹ one of the series of Columbia University Lectures. 'The Evolution of Sex,' 'The Mendelian Principles of Heredity,' 'Secondary Sexual Characters,' 'Parthenogenesis' and 'Sex-linked Characters,' are some of the topics discussed. Birds are constantly referred to and the work while hardly to be classed as strictly ornithological literature is one well worthy of the ornithologist's attention.

The first of the proposed annual meetings of the Wilson Ornithological Club was held in Chicago on February 5 and 6, 1914, and plans were formulated for similar yearly gatherings at points in the middle section of the country. For an initial gathering it was well attended and the business done will mean much for the cause of ornithology throughout the region which the Club especially covers. Such a movement will, we feel

¹ Columbia University Press. New York, 1913. 8vo. pp. 1-282.

sure, prove of immense benefit to the A. O. U. and will pave the way for a meeting of the latter body in Chicago or vicinity some time in the near future.

THE Delaware Valley Ornithological Club held its twenty-fourth annual meeting on the evening of January 14, 1914, at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. The following officers were chosen for the ensuing year, President, Stewardson Brown; Vice-President, Henry W. Fowler; Secretary, J. Fletcher Street; Treasurer, Samuel C. Palmer; Editor of 'Cassinia,' Robert Thomas Moore. The meetings have been well attended during the year and a number of interesting communications have been made. Among others may be mentioned the 'Musical versus the Syllabic Method of Recording Bird Song,' by R. T. Moore; 'The Embryology of a Bird,' by Dr. Samuel C. Palmer; 'Notes on Birds Observed on a Trip through Florida and Texas,' by James A. G. Rehn, 'On Kirtland's Warbler in Michigan' by Dr. Max M. Peet, and 'Fish-eating Birds,' by Henry W. Fowler.

The Club is preparing to increase its corps of bird migration observers and will be glad to furnish blank schedules for making returns to anyone in eastern Pennsylvania or southern New Jersey who desires to aid in the work.

THE Linnæan Society of New York, held its annual dinner at the Hotel Endicott, New York City, on the evening of March 24, 1914. Dr. Daniel Giraud Elliot was the guest of honor.

THE coming Thirty-second Stated Meeting of the A. O. U. to be held at Washington, D. C., April 6-9, 1914, marks a new policy on the part of the organization. The first and second meetings were held in September, the fifth in October, and several early in December, but all the others in November, usually during the second week in the month.

The objects of the change to April were explained in the January issue of 'The Auk' and it is to be hoped that many members who were hitherto unable to be present will this year find it possible to attend, and also that the change from autumn to spring will not prove inconvenient to those who through many years' attendance have become thoroughly identified with the meetings.

The circular issued by the local committee states that an invitation has been received from Dr. Frank Baker inviting the members to visit the National Zoölogical Park, a delightful spot where in April many wild native migrant birds may doubtless be seen as well as the foreign species which are, from force of circumstances, resident there. Further possibilities in this direction are opened up by the additional announcement that if weather conditions will permit there will be short field excursions under

the guidance of local members, and "it is recommended that walking shoes be included in the baggage."

If this spring meeting proves the success that we hope it may, there is no reason why the field trips may not eventually become as important a part of the program as in the case of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, where regular 'camp outs' are held after the meeting and observations of much importance are made.

At any rate let us urge every member of the Union to make a point of being in Washington on April 7, prepared to help make this the best meeting that the A. O. U. has held.